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20 June 1961

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary of Defense

Subject: SNIE 2-61, "Soviet and Other Reactions to
Various Courses of Action Regarding Berlin"

Enclosure: Brief of SNIE 2-61

On 19 June 1961, the United States Intelligence Board approved an estimate on "Soviet and Other Reactions to Various Courses of Action Regarding Berlin" (SNIE 2-61). A brief of this estimate is attached for your information, in advance of the regular distribution which will be forthcoming.

Richard Collins
RICHARD COLLINS
Major General, USA
Director for Intelligence

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BRIEF

SNIE 2-61: "Soviet and Other Reactions to Various Courses of Action Regarding Berlin"

This Special National Intelligence Estimate was approved by the United States Intelligence Board on 19 June 1961. The principal judgments in this estimate are:

The Soviets do not intend to wage general war in order to change the status of Berlin. The Soviet leaders have not yet been persuaded that the United States will go to general war in order to prevent a change in the status of Berlin. If they were to become convinced that the United States will actually go to general war over Berlin, they would back off and seek negotiations, providing the United States had left them this recourse.

The Soviets would oppose the use of substantial force in any attempt to restore access to Berlin. In the NATO countries and in most non-European countries there would be little public support for the more drastic allied responses over Berlin access. In most European countries, attention would be focused primarily upon the possibility of general war, and this consideration would probably override views about the rights and wrongs of the access issue.

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